

Town of Salem
Special Town Meeting
Town Hall Room 1
July 25, 2023

First Selectman Ed Chmielewski welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

MSC: V. Waters/P. Munro to elect Vernon Smith as moderator of this meeting. All in favor. Motion carries.

Town Clerk Linda Flugrad read the warning, motion and resolution relevant to this meeting.

Moderator Smith invited Todd Burnett, Burnett's Country Gardens, to explain the solar project he is seeking to complete which he will need financial assistance from Green Bank for.

At Mr. Burnett's invitation, Catherine Duncan from Connecticut Green Bank explained the C-PACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy) program and financing available for clean energy projects. 95 Connecticut municipalities have had or currently have projects in the works; approximately 140 municipalities have opted in to utilize this project at some point.

First Selectman Chmielewski inquired if this will increase our taxes if it is approved. Ms. Duncan indicated there will be no impact to our taxes. He further questioned if solar will increase the value of the property when the project is completed to which Ms. Duncan replied that it could benefit the value of the property.

P. Munro, Skyline Drive, clarified that we are voting tonight whether or not to have the program available for Salem. We are not specifically voting for Burnett's Country Gardens utilizing the financing for his solar project.

S. Spang, Hartford Road, asked if there is a lot of administrative work involved for the Town. Ms. Duncan said there is not additional administrative work for the Town because Connecticut Green Bank does the billing and collecting on their own.

M. Reinert, Harris Road, inquired why applicants can't go directly to the bank for their financing. Ms. Duncan stated that the required benefit assessment lien is a power of the municipality that can only be placed on the property by the Tax Collector.

N. Rabe, Valley Drive, questioned the validity of the agreement. On page 1 under the recitals, the fourth WHEREAS states "... the municipality has agreed to assess, collect, remit and assign benefit assessments ..." This contradicts what Ms. Duncan has been presenting to us.

Ms. Duncan noted that the agreement presented by the CT Green Bank to the Town of Salem is no longer accurate. She could not produce the updated agreement.

Selectman K. Lyden, Forest Drive, expressed support for this type of project as it dovetails into the last three Plans of Conservation and Development (POCD). He further stated that we cannot act on something incorrect. If Ms. Duncan could present us with the correct copy of the agreement, we could act on it tonight.

First Selectman Chmielewski recessed the meeting to attempt to rectify the issue at 6:44. This attempt was not successful.

The meeting was reconvened at 6:56. First Selectman Chmielewski stated that CT Green Bank could not provide us with the correct document. The correct document has not been posted. We, therefore, cannot vote on this resolution tonight.

No date for a future meeting was set.

M/S/C: K. Lyden, M. Reinert, all in favor, motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58.

Respectfully submitted:

Linda Flugrad, Town Clerk.